

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The U.S. Department of Justice today announced grant awards for the COPS Hiring Recovery Program, which was included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act signed into law in February.

The Central Coast will see a total of \$8.3 million in grants, which will allow cities to hire 21 police officers. Grants were awarded by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS).

“This injection of police officers into our communities is a critical component of the Recovery Act,” said Congressman Sam Farr (D-Carmel). “As the economy continues to suffer and California struggles with budget shortfalls, we must support our local governments and make sure our police departments are fully staffed. I’m especially pleased that Salinas will receive nine additional officers in their battle against the continuing plague of gang violence.”

Local police departments receiving officers:

- Salinas, 9 officers (\$3,837,546)
- Santa Cruz, 5 officers (\$1,971,350)
- Watsonville, 3 officers (\$1,080,468)
- Capitola, 1 officer (\$291,217)
- King City, 1 officer (\$302,501)
- Marina, 1 officer (\$415,267)
- Sand City, 1 officer (\$398,955)

The COPS grant program provides 100 percent funding for entry-level salaries and benefits for three years for newly-hired, full-time sworn officer positions or for rehired officers who have been laid off or are scheduled to be laid off. Local police departments must then retain all new officers for a minimum of 12 months following the 36 months of federal funding. Previous COPS grants required local matching funds; the Recovery Act waived that requirement for these funds.

“Even with all our recent cuts, we’re still facing severe budget issues,” said Santa

Cruz Mayor Cynthia Mathews. "By covering the salary and benefit costs of five officers for three years, this grant allows us to avoid reductions in our police force. It comes at a critical time when public safety needs are very high, but funding is painfully limited. We are enormously grateful to Congressman Farr in helping to secure these funds that will make such a difference at the local level."

The COPS Hiring Recovery Program awarded a total of \$1 billion in grants to 1,046 police departments around the country. Grant awards should provide for the hiring or rehiring of 4,700 officers. California alone will receive more than \$211 million to hire 650 officers.

"Today's announcement by Vice President Biden of \$1 billion in Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, COPS Hiring Recovery Program grants will allow the City of Salinas to hire nine additional police officers and further our commitment to eliminating gang violence in Salinas," said Salinas Mayor Dennis Donohue.

The COPS Hiring Recovery Program funding is in addition to \$2.76 billion included in the Recovery Act to prevent and control crime and \$225 million to combat violence against women.

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